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AN
 ADDRESS
 TO THE
 LANDED INTEREST
 GREAT BRITAIN,
 ON THE PRESENT STATE
 OF THE
 DISTILLERY.

BY THE FARMERS IN SCOTLAND.

Mr William Mackie, Farmer

YE generous Britons! venerate the Plough;
 And o'er your hills, and long withdrawing vales,
 Let Autumn spread her treasures to the Sun,
 Luxuriant and unbounded.
 So, with superior boon, may your rich soil,
 Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
 O'er every Land, the naked Nations clothe,
 And be th' exhaustless granary of a World!

in Commission - East Lothian
 THOMSON.

EDINBURGH:
 PRINTED FOR WILLIAM CREECH,

M,DCC,LXXXVI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE calculations in the following Address, pointing out the advantages that would attend connecting the distillation of corn-spirits with the agriculture of Great Britain, having been laid before a committee of farmers, appointed on purpose to examine them, were approved of, and ordered to be inserted in the Address as they presently appear.

AN

A D D R E S S, &c.

AT a period, when * four successive bad crops have stripped a great number of the farmers in Scotland of a considerable share of that capital, which they employed in the cultivation and improvement of their farms—we are astonished to find that an almost total stop is put to the sale of our barley, notwithstanding that the last crop of that grain was
the

* The crops here alluded to are 1782, 1783, 1784, and 1785. Crop 1784 proved good in England, but was miserably bad in Scotland, particularly in the wheat, barley, and pease. In that year, the writer of this note, although situated in East Lothian, within less than four miles from the shore, went out in a morning to cut down beans and barley, when the mercury in the thermometer stood at six degrees below the freezing point on Fahrenheit's scale, the texture of the grain was entirely destroyed, there being a thin cake of ice betwixt the lobes of almost every bean in the field.

the most deficient that this country has ever experienced.

In this distressing situation, we esteem it our duty to lay before our landlords a state of our grievances, having full confidence in the generous support of the landed interest, and in the abilities of those noblemen and gentlemen who presently represent this part of the united kingdom in Parliament.

When any country is afflicted with a bad crop, the loss ought undoubtedly to be sustained by every member of the community, in proportion to his abilities : But, in that event, as the high price of grain has the effect to lessen the demand for it in the market, the farmer can never obtain an advanced price equivalent to the deficiency of his crop, by which means the greatest portion of the loss falls upon the husbandman, and which, after four scanty crops, is severely felt by us all.

When-

Whenever, therefore, any cause operates so as to lessen the demand for grain, and sink its value in the market below its proper standard, being the price proportioned to the goodness or badness of the crop, that cause will always prove injurious to agriculture, and, at this critical juncture, may be attended with ruinous effects to many tenants, which it is certainly the interest of the proprietors of land in general to avert ; by using every means in their power to remove the causes which occasion the evil ; amongst the greatest of which may be ranked the present Excise laws for regulating and raising a revenue from the distillation of corn spirits, and which, as they have brought the present distress on the farmers, ought to be the first to merit the particular attention of the landed interest.

By these laws no distiller can extract spirits from grain of the growth of Great Britain, unless he is possessed of a capital
which

which will enable him to carry on his business, by using a still which must contain upwards of four hundred gallons ; nor can any person export British corn spirits unless they were distilled in a still which will hold sixteen hundred.

Stills of every denomination are kept locked by the Excisemen, and the distiller must send them twelve hours previous notice before he can get his stills opened, and must begin to work at a certain hour, although it is absolutely impossible to determine before hand at what particular time his work will be in the fittest state for yielding the greatest quantity of spirits of the best quality : Fermentation being of a precarious nature, and depending much on the state of the weather, and which nice operation is at present frequently injured by the Excisemen opening the wash batches while the fermentation is carried on, and allowing the gas or fixed air to escape.

Di-

Distillers must work off their stills in twenty hours after they are opened, although the cold water used in the operation should prove insufficient, which renders their spirits totally unfit for use.

If any distiller sends out his spirits to a rectifier of a greater degree of strength than one to ten over hydrometer proof, such spirits are liable to be seized ; a regulation which must often prove vexatious to the distillers, as the hydrometer proof varies with the temperature of the air.

If any distiller shall extract more than twenty gallons of spirits of the strength of one to ten over hydrometer proof out of 100 gallons of wash, all such surplus quantities shall be seized by the excise-officer, and forfeited.

The duty presently levied on corn spirits is fivepence on the gallon of wash ; but there is an exemption in favour of George
Bishop

Bishop of Medfton, who is allowed to diftil corn fpirits under the name of *Medfton Geneva*, upon paying only twopence half-penny *per* gallon.

The facility and difpatch with which corn fpirits can be diftilled, the temptation to evade the high duties, and the impoffibility of afterwards diftinguifhing the fpirits that have paid the duty from thofe which have not, has hitherto prevented, and will always obftruct government in fecuring payment of the whole of the duties impofed on that article. Rigorous laws have therefore been enacted, and fevere penalties inflicted, which, in the hands of fome officers of Excife, have only ferved as engines of diftruction to crush various individuals, without contributing in the leaft to increafe the revenue, but which, on the contrary, has of late been confiderably diminished*.

But,

* Mr Pitt complained when he brought in the laft diftillery law, that the revenue from the article of corn fpirits had fallen near one half.

But, if the enforcing of these laws, even with the design of encreasing the revenue, has the effect at any time to put a stop to the sale of barley, it must be acknowledged that there is something fundamentally wrong in them, which can bring such general distress on the husbandmen, who certainly merit from this country an equal share of encouragement with the manufacturing part of the nation.

That there are substantial reasons for withing a repeal of those laws, appears evident from the conduct of the Commisfioners of Excife, who, owing to some impelling power, (as is conjectured), were obliged to act in the manner they have done for some time past, in inforcing the diftillery laws in this country.

For last winter that Board * ordered three additional 'excise-officers to be placed only
B upon

* The order here alluded to was to the following purpose: That all those distillers in Scotland who would

upon such distillers as would not carry on their business to the extent which they were pleased to point out ; by which means all those small distillers that were dispersed through the country, and afforded to the farmers a ready market for their crops of barley and hay, and supplied us with spirits distilled from the produce of our own soil, and who, for want of capital and other conveniencies, could not comply with the order from the Board, were obliged to give over their business to the great prejudice of the farmers.

Whilst

would not charge their stills four times in the week, and pay duty accordingly, should have four excisemen placed upon them to watch them, night and day. In consequence of this order every distiller, with a small capital, was obliged to give over business, because they could neither procure barley from the farmers, nor consumpt for their spirits, to enable them to comply with the order from the Board ; and it was as impossible for them to go on with their trade with the watchmen, because in that event they would have been obliged to pay a much larger portion of the tax than the great distillers, who consequently could undersell them in the spirit market.

Whilst another class of distillers were allowed to proceed in a manner without controul, thereby monopolizing the trade into a few hands, and which not only enabled them to supply the whole of the demand for spirits in Scotland, but also to send up large quantities to the London market.

It is, however, evident, that the above mentioned order from the Board of Excise, was by no means intended either to increase the revenue, or put a stop to the practice of evading payment of the duties on corn spirits ; for, after the excise laws had been made the engines of power to crush the small distillers, after their trade had been totally stopped, and those favoured distillers, who alone were allowed to go on with the business, had got the total command of supplying the Scots market with spirits ; at that very period, the price of corn spirits in Scotland fell 25 *per cent.* ; a proof that at no former time
had

had the evading of the duties been carried to so great a length *.

In this situation was the distillery business conducted in Scotland during the whole of spring 1785, and the preceding winter: But during last summer the Commissioners judged it expedient to place three additional excisemen on every distiller in Scotland who was then carrying on trade. But this regulation had a very different effect from the former. Several of the large distillers, who, by complying with the requisition

* It will appear paradoxical at first sight, that, after four or five great distillers had obtained a monopoly of the trade, they should have allowed the price of spirits to fall. The reason is obvious. These great distillers, in complying with the order from the Board of Excise, were obliged to distill a large additional quantity of spirits; they could not, however, allow this great quantity to remain on hand, or enter their stocks, because it would have been seized by the officers of excise; they were therefore obliged to push it off at a low rate; but if they had been situated, like the London distillers, in the heart of the market, they would have been under no such necessity.

quisition of the Board, had been allowed to carry on a brisk business through the spring and preceding winter, now shut shop ; the price of corn spirits rose near 40 *per cent.* above what they had been sold at by particular distillers during the winter ; and so much did the high price of spirits encourage the smuggling in of Dutch gin and brandy, that these articles have for some time been currently sold at much lower rates than for several years past, owing to the officers of excise being entirely taken up with watching the distillers, which took off the whole of their attention from preventing the illegal importation and sale of foreign spirits *.

In this distressing situation the business continued till towards the end of December
last,

* The above is a truth, whatever the Board of Excise may assert. *Vide* FACTS.

I can give you no whisky, said my host in a country inn, because the distilleries are all stopped : But, God be praised, you shall have as much good Dutch gin as you can set your face to.

last, when the Board of Excise issued out another mandate, calling off the three additional excisemen from every distiller in Scotland, those only excepted that send up spirits to the London market, on whom they continue to place four excisemen, who watch them constantly night and day *.

It therefore now appears, that the moving power which impelled the Board of Excise to act in the inconsistent manner they have done for some time past, must proceed from the weight of the distillers in the city of London, who have had the address and the influence to get such distillery laws enacted as gives them a total monopoly of the business in England, the whole trade

* Since writing the above, it is said that the Board of Excise have withdrawn the three additional excisemen from the greatest distiller in Scotland. Oh ! there are such marchings and countermarchings, from Brentford to Elin, from Elin to Acton, from Acton to Uxbridge, that many a *good excise officer*, like Major Molossas, is carried off ————— an irreparable loss to the service.

trade being in a manner confined to the city of London, and enables them to crush, with the oppression of most rigorous laws, those particular distillers in Scotland who send up spirits to the London market ; for, living in the centre of the greatest market in Britain themselves, they have daily opportunities of disposing, without permit, of that part of their spirits which they distil without paying any duty ; whereas, those that are situated at a distance, must pay duty for every gallon they send to that market. But what sets this matter in the clearest point of view, is the following fact : The monopolists, in framing the last law, in order to distress the poor distillers in Scotland, got a clause inserted, obliging every distiller to fill his still three-fourths full of wash, which regulates the charge of duty conform to act of parliament ; and which clause is rigidly enforced in Scotland. : But the London distillers, we are informed, are charged with the duty as if they only filled their stills half full of wash ; an allowance

lowance

lowance granted them exprefsly contrary to the words of the ftatute above mentioned *.

It

* The above mentioned fact comes from the Scots diftillers. Mr Aitchifon has always publicly declared, that Mr Paine, one of the greateft diftillers in the city of London, informed Mr Haig, that they filled their ftills in London half full of wafh, and were charged with duty accordingly ; and that afterwards they were allowed to fill them up with water. It muft be acknowledged, that this fact has rather the appearance of fome miftake in the parties. It is, however, certain, that, at a general meeting of the great diftillers, held in Edinburgh, where Meflrs Steens, Haig, and, Aitchifon, were prefent, amongft other grievances this was pointed out, and it was propofed to fend up an agent to London, to complain of the partiality fhewn to the London diftillers ; it is therefore here inferted that the matter may be inveftigated, which can be eafily done, by only comparing the entries in the excife-books, with the contents of the diftillers ftills : For the claufe inferted in the act of parliament, obliging diftillers to fill their ftills three-fourths full of wafh, was abfolutely neceffary to prevent the moft flagrant abufes that were committed by diftillers in general, and which only became particularly diftreffing to the fmall diftillers in Scotland, on account of their being obliged to work with ftills ten times larger than they had any occafion for.

It was the influence also of those gentlemen, who, aiming at a complete monopoly of the manufacture of corn-spirits in Britain, fixed the minimum, or smallest size of the still, at 400 gallons; a regulation which must prove very hurtful to the revenue, as, by establishing a monopoly, it gives great encouragement to the carrying on of clandestine distillation in private unentered stills, and prevents the landed interest and farmers from reaping the advantages which will always attend the distillation of corn-spirits, when fixed upon the same fair and equal footing with any other manufacture in the kingdom.

To the same influence may be placed the obtaining that most extraordinary law of 2d Geo. III. prohibiting the exportation of British corn-spirits, unless they are distilled in a still containing 1600 gallons; an act of parliament which ought to have been entitled; A Barrier Treaty for securing to the gentlemen distillers in the city of London

don the sole right of furnishing the merchants in Britain with spirits for exportation, and which is calculated to give them almost as complete a monopoly of the export trade, as if they had been erected into a company on purpose, by letters patent, with as exclusive privileges as the East India Company.

But although the laws of this free country may with propriety countenance a monopoly in favours of a company that supply us with Asiatic luxuries ; if, notwithstanding, they, in the smallest degree, establish a monopoly in the purchase of the produce of the soil, in favours of any class or description of men, either by limiting the number of purchasers or otherwise, such laws will always prove hurtful to agriculture.

We beg that the landed interest will advert to the wretched situation of the husbandmen, and even proprietors of the land,
in

in those countries where monopolies of the produce of the soil are established ; and, feeling ourselves threatened with the same evil, we call upon our landlords to relieve us from our distress, by obtaining a repeal of the present distillery laws, and to get such enacted as will not only secure a revenue to government, but also give uninterrupted encouragement to the industry of the farmer.

That these laws cramp the industry of Great Britain is beyond a doubt ; for, were they enforced in our West India islands, they would check their cultivation, by effectually preventing the distillation of rum. Was France to adopt them, she would ruin the cultivation of her vines ; and by those laws is Great Britain prevented from cultivating her waste lands, from rearing and fattening immense herds of oxen, for victualling her numerous fleets, and from raising large additional quantities of grain,
either

either for supplying the home market, or for exportation.

They also prevent us from manufacturing the whole of the barley which is at present produced in Britain, and obliges us to pay the Dutch a bounty for taking it off our hands, securing to them the advantages of distilling it, and who smuggle it in upon our coasts, converted into spirits of a superior quality to any made in this country.

But, from what cause does the inferior quality of British corn-spirits originate? Is not the temperature of the climate of Britain the most favourable in the world for producing at all times a proper fermentation on worts extracted from barley and other grain? Are not malt liquors*, so justly described by the poet, the glory of England,

* I have now in my cellar ten tons of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of March, old stile.

Beaux Stratagem, act 1. sc. 1.

England, and stand unrivalled by other nations ; and the same cause would undoubtedly produce corn-spirits of the best quality, if it was not for ruinous distillery laws *.

To

* How widely different from Bonniface does the distillery laws oblige the distiller to manage his stock. As the law is presently framed, without an expence that would nearly sink the revenue altogether, it is absolutely impossible to oblige every individual to pay an equal share of the duties. In order, therefore, that they may come upon equal terms to market, every one of them rack their inventions in discovering the most effectual modes of defrauding government ; the spirits are consequently hurried through the stills with astonishing rapidity, and, in the hasty operation, are mixed with most fetid oils. But, like Bonniface, can he keep them in his cellar till they are matured with age : By no means, they would be seized by the excise-officer, and are therefore sent into the market, smoking hot from the still, in such a state, that the person must be possessed with the fortitude of Socrates, who can swallow the contents of a cup without having the muscles of his face distorted with convulsions. It is therefore no wonder that Bonniface was so much obliged to the Irish gentleman, who presented his wife with

To prove them such, let any minister in Great Britain adopt them, with similar restrictions, for the purpose of raising a revenue from any other manufacture ; we shall suppose by a tax of one shilling on every pound of cotton spun by the cotton-mills lately erected, machines equally productive with the still, of articles of luxury and convenience.

For the better securing of the revenue, it would then be enacted, that no cotton engine shall be erected, unless it could spin 400 pounds weight in one day.

That no cotton goods shall be exported, unless they were spun in a machine that could consume 1600 pounds weight in the day.

That

with the dozen of usquebaugh, the remarkable bad quality of which proceeded from its being Irish manufacture, and we may presume was extracted from potatoes ; for the good people of England now drink corn-spirits converted into most excellent French brandy, by only putting in a few drops of a certain compound, without its being in the least prejudicial to their constitutions.

That the excise-officer shall have the total command of those machines, and keep them carefully locked up.

That the manufacturer shall be obliged to send the excise-officer twelve hours notice before at any time he shall proceed to business, and shall then be obliged either to stop his operations at the end of twenty hours, or continue for other twenty hours, whether it suit him or not.

If the manufacturer shall spin a greater quantity of cotton in the space of twenty hours, or from his superior skill and ingenuity shall draw out of the rough materials a greater quantity of cotton-yarn than the law prescribes ; all such surplus quantities shall be seized by the excise-officer.

That, for the better securing of the revenue, all cotton shall be spun of one fineness ; and if any shall be manufactured of a different quality from what the law prescribes,

scribes, all such shall be seized by the excise-officer.

That every manufacturer, who, for want of a capital or other conveniencies, cannot carry on his trade with machines of the size above mentioned, must give over business, and allow his small spinning engines to be destroyed by the excise-officer, or be fined for using them.

It is obvious, that, if any minister was to propose such a tax, attended with such rigorous restrictions, that the mercantile and manufacturing part of the nation would most justly oppose it. The West India planters would also join in the outcry, and complain that it would cramp the cultivation of their estates. But, however ruinous these laws might prove to the cotton-manufacture, it is evident they are more hurtful to the agriculture of Great Britain, when applied to the manufacture of corn-spirits ; for cotton is the produce of a foreign

reign country, can be easily transported to whatever part of the kingdom the monopoly is established, and returns no manure, so necessary in the cultivation of the soil.

It is true, indeed, that cotton is the produce of our colonies : But it is to be hoped, that this country has now learned, from dear bought experience, that the fruits to be reaped, from encouraging the cultivation of colonies, are vain and imaginary ; and that the prosperity of the state must in a great measure depend upon that degree of perfection to which the cultivation of the mother country can be brought.

For accelerating this great national object, we shall lay before the public the good effects which may be expected from connecting the distillation of corn-spirits with the agriculture of this country, and which is only prevented at present, by laws that sacrifice the public good, for the sole

D . purpose

purpose of advancing the interest of a few rich individuals.

We therefore submit to the consideration of every person versant in country affairs, the following scheme of a rotation of crops on a farm, containing 168 acres, of a clay soil, and poor quality, situated at a distance from a populous town, where no adventitious manure can be procured; and the probable produce of the same farm, when connected with a small distillery, capable of feeding 30 oxen, and 60 hogs, constantly, and which a still of 50 English gallons is well able to perform, 10,400 stones of hay being annually consumed in fattening the cattle on the farm.

Scheme

Scheme of rotation of crops, and account of produce resulting therefrom.

On the farm without the distillery.

Produce in Scots measures and weights.

Farm containing 168 acres.

Acres.	Quality of Grain.	Produce per acre.	Total produce.	Price at the Edinburgh market.			
* 12	Fallow		Bolls.	s.	d.	L.	s.
12	Wheat	7 Bolls	84	18	10	79	2
12	Pease	3	36	11	10	21	6
12	Barley	5	60	13	4	40	0
12	Hay	130 stone	1560		3½	22	15
12	Pasture			20		12	0
12	Oats	6 bolls	72	12		43	4
† 12	Fallow						
12	Oats	7 bolls	84	12		50	8
12	Hay	120 stone	1440	0	3½	21	0
12	Pasture			20	0	12	0
12	ditto			15	0	9	0
12	ditto			15	0	9	0
12	Oats	5 bolls	60	12	0	36	0
Total amount of the produce				L. 355 15			

Produce

* Dunged with 22 cart loads per acre.

† Without manure.

Produce in English measures and weights.

Farm containing 213 acres.

Acres.	Quality of Grain.	Produce per acre.	Total produce.	Corresponding price at the Edinburgh market.
* 15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Fallow	qrs. bush.	qrs. s. d.	
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Wheat	2 7	44	36 0 qr. Winchester
15 $\frac{5}{8}$	Pease	1 2	18 $\frac{1}{4}$	22 5
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Barley	3 0	45 $\frac{1}{4}$	17 1
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Hay	1 load 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.	16 $\frac{1}{4}$	27 2 per London load
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Pasture			15 8
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Oats	3 5 bolls	54 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 5
† 15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Fallow			
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Oats	4 1	63 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 5
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Hay	1 load	15 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 2 per London load
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Pasture			15 8 per acre
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	ditto			11 9
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	ditto			11 9
15 $\frac{1}{4}$	Oats	3 qrs.	45 $\frac{1}{4}$	15 5 per quarter.

Scheme

* Dunged with 17 loads per acre.

† Without manure.

Scheme of rotation of crops, and probable produce on the same farm, when connected with a small distillery, carrying on trade with a still of 50 English gallons, the revenue being collected by a licence on the contents of the still), which, with the quantity of hay allowed, being 10,400 stone, or about 112 London loads, will feed constantly 30 oxen, weighing on an average 30 stone each, and 60 hogs.

Produce in Scots measure and weights.

Acres.	Quality.	Produce per acre.	Produce.	Total Price.	Value at the Edinburgh market.
			Bolls	s. d.	L. s. d.
* 22	Fallow				
22	Wheat	9 bolls	198	18 10	186 9 0
22	Beans	7 do.	154	11 8	91 2 4
22	Barley	7 do.	154	13 4	102 13 4
† 22	Clov. hay	200 ft.	4400	3½	64 3 4
22	Wheat	8 bolls	176	18 10	165 14 8
22	Oats	8	176	12 0	105 12 0
14	Pasture			20 0	14 0 0

Amount of the produce of the soil L. 729 14 8

Pro-

* Dunged with 34 loads per acre.

† Dunged with 20 loads.

Produce in English measures and weights.

Acres.	Quality.	Produce per acre.	Total produce.	Corresponding price at the Edinburgh market	
* 28	Fallow	qrs. bufh.	Bolls. s. d.		
28	Wheat	3 6	103 $\frac{1}{4}$ 36	p.	Winchest. qr.
28	Beans	2 7	80 $\frac{1}{4}$ 22 5	per ditto	
28	Barley	4 1	116 $\frac{1}{2}$ 17 1	per ditto	
		load cwt.			
† 28	Hay clover	1 13	47 $\frac{1}{4}$ 27 2	per London load	
		qrs. bufh.	bolls.		
28	Wheat	3 2	92 36 0	per Winchest. qr.	
28	Oats	4 6	133 15 5	per ditto	
17	Pasture		15 8	per acre.	

To the amount of the produce of the farm, when
connected with the distillery L. 729 14 8.

To the value of 30 oxen,
30 stoncs each, fed 4
months, at L. 8 L. 240 0 0

To the value of 30 oxen,
30 stoncs each, fed 4
months, at L. 8 240 0 0

Carried over L. 480 0 0 L. 729 14 8

* Dunged with 27 loads per acre.

† Dunged with 16 loads per acre.

Brought over	L. 480 0 0	L. 729 14 8
To the value of 30 oxen, 30 stones each, fed 4 months, at L. 8	240 0 0	
	L. 720 0 0	
Deduct cost price, when purchased at L. 5 each,	450 0 0	
Gained by feeding, being about 5 d. per day on each ox -	L. 270 0 0	
Deduct hay consumed in fattening the oxen, viz. 3000 stones purchased from neighbouring far- mers at 4 d.	50 0 0	
3000 ditto at 3 d.	37 10 0	
4,400 ditto produced on the farm at $3\frac{1}{2}$ d.	64 3 4	
	L. 151 13 4	
		L. 118 6 8
To the value of 60 hogs, fed for 6 months	L. 90 0 0	
To ditto for ditto	90 0 0	
	L. 180 0 0	
Carried over	L. 180 0 0	L. 848 1 4

Brought over	L. 180	0	0	L. 848	1	4
Deduct cost price paid to the farmers 10s. each		60	0	0		
				L. 120	0	0
Total amount of produce, including pro- fits on the cattle	-			L. 968	1	4
Deduct original produce on the farm without the distillery	-			L. 355	15	0
Gain arising from connecting the distil- lery with agriculture	-			L. 612	6	4

Although we have exhibited the above modes of cropping as being proper on a clay soil, of a poor quality, we by no means hold them up as being the best calculated to produce either the greatest profit to the farmer, or advantage to the state. Particular modes of cropping ought, undoubtedly, to be left to the judgment of the husbandman, who, after many years experience will probably discover the proper mode of cropping, which best suits the particularities in the soil, climate, and situation of his farm.

Systems in agriculture are of all others the most futile and absurd. We see the systems of the greatest men in every science daily attacked, and frequently overthrown: But in agriculture, the small progress that has hitherto been made in the theory of the art; the infinite diversity of soil and climate, and numberless accidents resulting from both, to which the farmer is exposed, has rendered the laying down systems in agriculture, not only hurtful to the country in general, but also to those particular landlords who enforce them*.

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* These restrictions appear in full force in some parts of England. When a Scots farmer, crossing the Tweed, views the native fertility of the soil, and compares the rich crops with the low rent of the land, he is at first struck with astonishment: But when he begins to reflect on the burthens which the English farmers labour under, from the restrictions inserted in their leases; the still more oppressive laws of King Melchisedeck; the great load of poors rates, and inconveniencies attending the militia in time of peace; he thanks his stars he was born on the north side of the Tweed; and, deviating for once from the rigid simplicity of his devotion,

We have only here in view the restrictions inserted in some leases, where the tenant, from his entry, is bound down to follow particular modes of cultivation, thereby setting bounds to his genius and industry, and preventing improvements in an art, which, of all others, is the most useful to mankind.

We have therefore only to add, in defence of the annexed rotation of crops, that every article in the account is calculated on a moderate scale, without the smallest intention either to exaggerate or deceive; and we doubt not that every farmer, who possesses such a farm as we have described, will, upon mature deliberation, acknowledge, whatever rotation of crops he may follow, that, was he enabled to feed 30 oxen and 60 hogs constantly, and consume 10,400 additional stones of
hay

devotion, joins in the liturgy of the English church, devoutly exclaiming from all such evils—Good Lord deliver us!

hay annually ; with the large furplus quantity of * manure arising therefrom, he would find no difficulty in doubling the quantity of grain produced on his farm.

We shall, therefore, proceed to examine the advantages that would accrue to the state, if the ruinous fabric of oppression and monopoly, reared up by the distillery laws, was fairly beat down by the united efforts of the landed interest in Great Britain, thereby allowing the manufacture of corn-spirits, and the agriculture of this country, to give most effectual aid to each other.

From

* The quantity of manure which the distillery affords, when joined with agriculture, is really most astonishing — We beg the public will attend to the following fact : A great distiller, though not the greatest in this country, publicly offered L. 200 Sterling to any person who would cart up his dung from the dunghill, and lay it down in small heaps along the ridges, on the particular fields which he wished to have manured. But this offer was rejected, as being, like the cleaning of the Augean stable, only fit to be performed by the Herculean labours of a great distiller.

* From the best information we have been able to procure, the barley consumed in

* We do not pretend that the information in this particular is to be depended on. The quantity of grain which a distiller consumes in his operations is concealed with the greatest care. We have been informed, that in the city and vicinity of London there are eight distilleries, in each of which there is daily consumed, on an average, 120 quarters in malt, barley, or other grain, and malt flour; and that they continue working every day, during eight months, for supplying the home market.

The above quantities will therefore amount,	quarters.
<i>per annum</i> , to about -	185,000
Six houses continue working during three months in the summer season for exportation, and make 70 quarters daily, or about	35,000
Suppose the rest of England and Scotland to amount to - -	180,000
	400,000

Amount of the revenue arising from British spirits,
from Michaelmas 1783 to Michaelmas 1784.

L. 16031 on British spirits, per duties imposed at and prior to 29th September 1736	
24,217	ditto 25th March 1743
9,799	— 1746

in the distillation of corn-spirits may be estimated at 400,000 Winchester quarters :

But

36,441	—	1st July 1751
100,152	—	21st April 1760
20,275	—	21st Jan. 1762
20,852	—	30th March 1780
8,486	on Low Wines,	29th Sept. 1736
10,061	ditto	25th March 1743
5,528	—	1746
14,447	—	1st July 1751
57,401	—	21st April 1760
11,668	—	21st Jan. 1762
11,943	—	30th May 1780

L. 347,301

15 per cent.

on ditto. 52,095

L. 399,396

This account of the revenue arising from British spirits, is taken from the Edinburgh magazine, and was published from good authority. The duties levied from spirits, extracted from molasses and other foreign and home materials, are included ; so that it is impossible to distinguish the exact sum paid upon corn-spirits. It is believed, however, that the revenue arising from the other materials is very inconsiderable : But from the total amount of the revenue, it is more than probable that a much larger quantity than 400,000 quarters of grain is annually distilled in Britain.

But if the trade was freed from the restrictions complained of, it would most undoubtedly increase. and might then be safely estimated at 500,000 quarters. Was the distillation of this quantity of grain to be diffused over the country, and produce the same good effects on agriculture in general, which the small distillery had upon the farm as above stated; in that event there would be annually brought into the British markets the following additional numbers of fat cattle, and quantities of grain, viz.

English weights and measures.

Corresponding prices
at the Edinburgh mar-
ket, on an average for
20 years

57,240 fat oxen, 37 stones 3 lib. each, 2,037,145	
stones butcher meat, at 3 s. 2½ d.	L. 341,710
400,680 stones tallow, 7 stones in each, at 4 s.	
5 d.	88.483
57,240 hides, 5 stones each, valued at 20 s.	57,240
76,320 hogs, 7 stone 6 lib. 566,948 stones pork,	
at 4 s. ½	113,980
Carried over	L. 601,413

Brought over	L. 601,413
96,513 quarters of wheat, at 36 s.	173,723
39,114 quarters of beans and pease, at 22 s. 5 d.	43,840
44,997 quarters of barley, at 17 s. 1 d.	38,434
	L. 857,410
Deduct deficiency in the produce of oats from connecting the distillery with agriculture, as above stated, on the produce of the farms.	
19,557 quarters of oats, at 15 s. 5 d.	15,075
Gained to the state from connecting the distil- lation of 500,000 quarters of barley with a- griculture.	L. 842,335
500,000 quarters of barley, at 14 gallons of spirits per quarter, will produce 7,000,000 gallons, at 3 s.	1,050,000
Total sum that may be gained to the state from the * manufacture of corn-spirits, if the mo- nopoly was removed, and the distillery regu- lated by moderate excise laws	L. 1,892,335
	Scots

* We hope the landed interest of Great Britain, in the event of a commercial treaty with France, will never allow this manufacture to be bartered away, for the privilege of peddling in that country needles and pins, and crockery ware.

Scots weights and measures, and prices of the best grain at the Edinburgh market, on an average, from *anno* 1761 to 1780, corresponding with the English weights and measures in the preceding pages, and from which the calculations were made out.

30 stones each ox, price 4 s. per stone.

4½ stones tallow in each, 6 s.

3¼ each hide, 20 s.

6 stones each hog.

Wheat, 18 s. 10 d. per boll.

Pease, 11 s. 8 d.

Barley, 13 s. 4 d.

Oats, 12 s.

From what has been stated, we hope it will appear that the distillation of corn-spirits is of the utmost importance to Great Britain, when it is viewed both as an immense source from whence great improvements in agriculture may be drawn, and also as an ample fund for yielding a larger revenue for support of the state than has hitherto been collected from that manufacture.

For accomplishing these important purposes, we most humbly recommend the following regulations to the consideration
of

of the ministry, and landed interest of Great Britain.

That the present distillery laws ought to be repealed, and the trade put upon the same fair and equal footing with any other manufacture in the kingdom affording a tax to government.

That, in lieu of the present mode of levying the duties, which, owing to the nature of the trade, can never be fairly nor equally collected, an ample revenue shall be raised, equal to what has been paid in most productive years, by a license on the contents of every * still used in Great Britain, either by distillers or rectifiers.

F

That

* The contents of the stills in England are supposed to be about	264,000 gallons.
and in Scotland	81,000

345,000 gallons.

But, if the revenue was collected upon the contents of the still, the above mentioned quantity would be probably reduced to 100,000 gallons, which, at L. 5 per gallon,

That every distiller in Great Britain be prohibited from distilling from barley before it has been previously malted ; a practice which hurts the quality of British corn spirits, and lessens the revenue arising from the malt duty.

That the license-duty on stills for manufacturing corn-spirits should be to regulate, that the fair trader, who pays the license-duty for his still, and distills only from malted grain, may be enabled to sell his spirits to the rectifiers at from 2 s. 6 d. to 3 s. *per* gallon ; by which means the smuggling of spirits, both foreign and domestic, so prejudicial to the revenue, and hurtful to the morals of the people, will be entirely put a stop to.

And

gallon, would produce L. 500,000. The proper criterion of the tax, however, is one which would allow the fair trader to sell spirits to the rectifiers at from 2 s. 6 d. to 3 s. *per* gallon, which, it is conjectured, would raise a much larger revenue to government than L. 500,000.

And for rendering the distillery business more beneficial to the state, by aiding the agriculture of the country, and encouraging the cultivation of the * waste lands, for which it is particularly well adapted, let

* It seems impossible to adopt a plan for cultivating the waste lands in Great Britain that will be conducted at less expence to the state, or has the prospect of being attended with greater success, than by giving encouragement to the erecting of small distilleries upon them; for these lands being generally situated at a distance from a populous neighbourhood, where neither manure nor a ready market can be procured for the produce in grain, the distillery business obviates both difficulties, as no less than L. 150 Sterling worth of strong spirits may be sent to the most distant market upon a cart drawn by two horses, and manure in large quantities is produced for improving the barren qualities of the soil. Manure is the source of all improvements in husbandry: It is wonderful with what oeconomy it is collected in China, where the inhabitants of great cities are not allowed to piss against the wall, and every particle of manure, to the very shavings of a beard, is treasured up with the greatest care for the use of the husbandmen, who, by that wise nation, are even held in greater estimation than the manufactures. The cultivation

let it be enacted, that any farmer, or other person connected with agriculture in England, shall be allowed to erect stills of the size of gallons contents, or upwards, and in Scotland of 30 gallons or upwards ; which size of 30 gallons to be the smallest that can be entered or used for the purpose of distilling corn-spirits in Scotland, by which means the monopoly will be removed, which at present occasions clandestine distillation to be carried on to a great extent, in private unentered stills, and will allow the manufacture of corn-spirits to give that aid to the farmers, for which it is so well adapted, by affording, at all times, a ready market for their crops of barley and hay.

And

tivation of the waste lands in Great Britain ought undoubtedly to be placed in the same point of view with an infant manufacture, which must always be ruined by an oppressive tax ; and it would therefore seem necessary, for encouraging their cultivation, that government will agree to commute, at least for a number of years, the heavy burthens of tithes, malt and spirit taxes, on their produce.

And for giving the proprietors of land and farmers further encouragement for extending the cultivation of Great Britain, let it be enacted, that the monopoly obtained by the great distillers, by 2d Geo. III. for securing to themselves the total exportation trade be repealed, and allow British corn spirits to be exported when distilled in licensed stills of any size, the proportional duties and bounties on the malt consumed, and duty on the spirits, to be drawn back upon exportation; a similar indulgence being granted for encouraging every other manufacture in the kingdom *.

For

* The Dutch carry on a great export trade in corn spirits. The geneva manufactured by them being held in great estimation over the whole world, large quantities are annually carried out by the Dutch and Danish ships to the East and West Indies. It is drunk by all the Northern nations, and immense quantities are annually brought into Britain by the smugglers. The following cost prices of the best Geneva, and French brandy, of the finest quality, were obligingly given
by

For the better preventing of clandestine distillation, let it be enacted, that no still shall

by two merchants in Edinburgh, who lately imported these articles.

Best strong Holland's geneva, cost per

English gallon,		L. 0	2	6
Excise and Customs,	-	0	9	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{8}$
Freight, insurance, &c.		0	0	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{8}{10}$
	per gallon	L. 0	12	2
Best Coniac brandy at Bourdeaux,		L. 0	2	0
Excise and Customs,	-	0	9	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{8}$
Freight, insurance, &c.	-	0	0	3 $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{8}{10}$
		L. 0	11	10

The above are the current prices of the best spirits that are entered to pay the duties ; but the price of the ordinary Dutch gin, which is smuggled into this country, runs from 14 s. to 18 s. per Flushing anker, of 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ English gallons, the value of the cask included, which costs a guilder, or 22 d. There is nothing that prevents Great Britain from carrying off this trade from the Dutch but the distillery laws. They are obliged to purchase of foreigners the whole of the grain from which the spirits are extracted ; whereas Great Britain can draw immense resources from the industry of her husbandmen. The gentlemen who imported the high priced

shall be made or transported from one place to another, without an order from the Collector of Excise in the district where the same is intended to be erected.

And that no maltster or brewer shall be allowed to dispose of malt, without an order in writing from the person wanting the same ; which order to be accompanied with a certificate from the exciseman in the bounds where the malt is to be used, setting forth that the same is for the use of a certain brewer, entered distiller, or private family ; the malt to be accompanied with a permit from the place where it was lodged, to the particular brewery or distillery specified in the certificate.

Should

priced geneva above mentioned, informs us, that George Bishop of Midston's geneva is equal, in point of flavour, to the very best Dutch. But for carrying on this gentleman's manufacture, a particular exemption from the severity of the distillery laws was found necessary, otherwise his manufacture would have been lost to this country.

Should the parliament of Great Britain establish the manufacture of corn-spirits, by enacting a general law to extend over the whole kingdom, for levying the duties by a license on the contents of the still, and thereby remove the monopoly, and free the trade from the fetters of Excise, much good may be expected to result from it, both by advancing the revenue, and encouraging the agriculture of this country.

If, however, the farmers in England have no reason to complain, and if the landed interest in that part of the united kingdom should esteem it dangerous to diffuse the distillery over England for the benefit of their tenants. It may be confined as at present to the city of London, and other great towns in England, by fixing the minimum, or smallest size of an enterable still at four, five, or six thousand gallons, which will allow, at the same time, a free intercourse betwixt the distillers in every part of the united kingdom and the
London

London market, it being then certain that spirits from Scotland must have paid an equal share of the duties with what is manufactured in England ; for it certainly can never be intended to shut out the distillers in Scotland from the greatest market for spirits in Europe, provided they are fair traders, for no other reason than furnishing the rectifiers in London with cheaper spirits than what is distilled in the heart of the city. Whenever the duties are levied in different manners in England and Scotland, and Scots spirits made liable in payment of an equalizing duty of 21 d. or 22 d. per gallon, upon entering the port of London, being nearly equal to the whole duty exacted by government, that trade will be at an end ; for the quantum of tax will be fixed on Scots spirits at that market, when perhaps the * London distillers

G

are

* We have been informed, by a gentleman who resided with a rectifier in the city of London, that, upon an average, only one puncheon in five of spirits came in
from

are not paying above the one half. This will most effectually break through those articles of the Union, which establish a free trade

from the distillers, accompanied with a permit ; or, in other words, that only one fifth part of the spirits distilled in London paid duty. This fact seems to be corroborated by the evidence brought before the committee of the House of Commons on smuggling, in their inquiries into the abuse of permits ; because it appeared, that, in a certain period, there had been three times the quantity of British corn-spirits permitted from Bristol to the London market than had paid the duties. The London distillers have better opportunities of defrauding government than any others who live at a distance from that market, and they have the advantage of being compacted into a firm and powerful body in parliament ; by which means, if these gentlemen have the inclination to defraud, the scheme will be reduced into a smooth and easy system, without the smallest danger of detection. It is therefore the opinion of many persons in Scotland, who have been in the practice of sending up spirits to the London market, that unless a general law is obtained, that trade will soon be entirely annihilated.

trade and intercourse betwixt the kingdoms *.

But if the landed interest in Scotland can obtain no other relief to their tenants, but by obtaining a partial law for regulating the distillery in Scotland, we humbly submit to their consideration the bad effects that would result from fixing the duty on the

* Should the English prove jealous at the rapid advances which Scotland is making in manufactures, and endeavour to crush them by the severity of Excise laws, it certainly discloses but a melancholy prospect to the view of the landed interest and farmers in Scotland; when it is considered, that the manufactures of corn-spirits, starch, soap, candles, ale, &c. are all of them so closely connected with the produce of this country, and labour under the fetters of Excise; whenever, therefore, a plan is proposed that will have the good effect to put a stop to that jealousy betwixt the sister kingdoms, so conspicuous at present in the manufacture of corn-spirits, it is to be hoped that the minister will either adopt it, or show sufficient grounds for his refusal.

the contents of the still at a * low rate : We are afraid it will occasion too great a consumption of barley in Scotland, which
would

* It is conjectured, that the gentlemen in Scotland are greatly misled by the distillers, when they are told, that 30s. per gallon will raise a permanent revenue, equal to the trifling sum that has hitherto been collected in Scotland. There are certain reasons which oblige distillers at present to keep stills in their possession to a much greater extent than they have any occasion for ; and whenever the duty is levied on the contents of the still, these reasons will be removed. If a law is obtained, imposing 30 s. per gallon in Scotland, it is not to be doubted but that the revenue will be considerably increased for one year. But the distillers will soon find out that the quantity of spirits which their present stills can produce, will bear no proportion to the quantity which the country can consume ; they will therefore cut down their stills to suit that demand, which must reduce the revenue to a trifle. We beg that the gentlemen will reflect, that the idea of L. 1 per gallon originated with four or five great distillers, who, without consulting the landed interest in Scotland, attempted to bring in a bill which would have given them a total monopoly of the Scotch market : Matters would then have gone smoothly on ; the present revenue would have been paid ; the price of spirits would
have

would raise the price of that article above its proper standard. Government would not receive a revenue equivalent to the increase of the manufacture, and the price of spirits will be rendered so low, that a great smuggling trade would take place betwixt Scotland and England, even by land carriage. A general clamour might consequently arise in the country against the alteration in the distillery laws, and designing men would lay hold of the opportunity of insisting with government, that the bad effects, which only resulted from fixing the rate of duty too low, had been occasioned by the alteration of the distillery laws in general, and would insist upon their being put upon their former footing.

Were the farmers in Scotland to be consulted, we should give it as our opinion,
that

have been kept up; the value of barley would have fallen; and those gentlemen-distillers would soon have got seats in parliament, and would have been secured in a revenue, equal to that of his Grace the Duke of Buccleugh, or perhaps Governor Hastings.

that the license on the still ought not to be under *per* gallon, which, if the minimum is brought down to 30 gallons, as is proposed, would at all times most effectually secure a competent revenue to government, and insure us in a market for our crops of barley and hay, and prevent the bad effects which would attend the reducing the price of spirits in Scotland below 2 s. 6 d. *per* gallon.

Your farmers have further to observe, that we are at present much imposed upon by the purchasers of our produce, owing to the irregularity and confusion in the weights and measures used in Scotland. By an article of the Union, the English weights and measures are established by law in Scotland. These measures and weights are all considerably less than the original Scots ones ; for which reason, the magistrates of boroughs have taken care to establish them, in the disposal of every manufactured commodity. But grain, and
every

every other article which your farmers bring to market, continue to be regulated by the old measures and weights ; and the magistrates in different boroughs now fix that quantum upon these weights and measures, which they, in their profound wisdom, judge, is for the benefit of the lieges. We have, however, here to observe, that these regulators of this important branch of police, always take care that their weights and measures shall be considerably above the ancient standards. Your farmers, at a great expence, have lately opposed an attempt to increase the corn measures, presently used in the city of Edinburgh, for purchasing grain from the farmers, (the corn-merchants measures in the port of Leith remaining of the same size as formerly,) but as yet we have obtained no relief.

We therefore most humbly recommend the above weighty matters to your consideration ;

deration; and have taken the liberty to address you, with no other intention than throwing light on these important objects; having full confidence, that you will use every means in your power to relieve the farmers in Scotland from that distress, of which they at present so justly complain.

Signed, in name of the Farmers in
Scotland, whose Delegates met at
Edinburgh, on the 18th January
1786, by

WM. MACKIE,
One of the Delegates from East Lothian.

* * The prices of grain, &c. mentioned in the schemes of cropping in the 27th and following pages of the Address, are the actual average prices of the best grain at the Edinburgh market, for 20 years, from 1761 to 1780, viz.

Wheat, 18 s. 10 d. Barley, 13 s. 4 d. Pease, 11 s. 10 d. Oats, 12 s. The corn measures of the farmers in Mid-Lothian are considerably larger than the legal standard. Their wheat firlots are computed to contain 2250 cubic inches, and their barley firlots 3250.

The above mentioned prices will therefore correspond with the following, per the Winchester quarter; Wheat, 36 s. Barley, 17 s. 1 d. Pease or Beans, 22 s. 5 d. Oats, 15 s. 5 d.

